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# VOLUNTEER SUMMER WORK OF THE FRANCIS W. PARKER SCHOOL

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An interesting phase of the activities of the Francis W. Parker School is the volunteer summer work. Some account of it is here given in the hope that it may prove suggestive to readers of the *Elementary School Teacher.*

Just before the school closes in June a type-written outline of suggestions for voluntary summer work and reading is given to the children of all grades who desire it. Paper of uniform size, and of quality suitable for composition and for sketches in pencil and water-color, also is furnished. The outline, while serving somewhat to direct the interest of the children, permits of great freedom, and the idea of the work has been taken hold of enthusiastically. When the school opens in the autumn, the contributions are collected, and all are bound together, just as they are, according to grade. The best ones are used as material for the morning exercises of the school.[1] A programme frequently consists of a single topic—a summer spent in the mountains, for example—treated of by children in different grades. The description of various places; the handling of the topic from many points of view; the display of collected illustrative matter—photographs, pencil-drawings, and water-color sketches—both instruct and entertain the assembled pupils, faculty, and visitors.

An examination of the records of voluntary summer work for the year 1904 reveals interests of various sorts. Many children wrote of local industries. Several sent in creditable botanical collections, one of which consisted of blue prints of specimens gathered by an enthusiastic little girl who spent her vacation in

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[1] Described by Jennie Hall, "Morning Exercises in the Francis W. Parker School," *Elementary School Teacher,* February, 1906.

England. Others sent in lists of wild and tame animals observed in their neighborhood or at places visited. There were some pupils who kept a record of problems solved, and of exercises written in German or French, and a few handed in original stories. The year of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, a number visited St. Louis, and kept a diary, well illustrated. All of the contributions breathed the spirit of voluntary work.

The following "Suggestions" were brought together by different instructors in the school and were edited as follows:

## SUGGESTIONS FOR VOLUNTARY WORK DURING VACATION

### FOUR REASONS FOR DOING WORK DURING VACATION

1. To make a souvenir to remind one of the places seen and things done in the summer.

2. To add material to the school museum.

3. To furnish the school with valuable descriptions of places and industries. Papers which are good enough for class reading will be printed. They will also furnish interesting material for the morning exercises throughout the year.

4. To have the pleasure of the work. If the work is not a pleasure, it had better not be done.

I. *Suggestions for souvenirs.*

Keep a diary.

Make drawings or paintings of interesting places or things.

Collect plants, or minerals of locality.

If you go to the exposition, collect souvenirs which are worth while. (Advertising souvenirs frequently are valuable.)

II. *Suggestions for collections for the school museum.*

Only things which are of real value in showing the animal or vegetable life of some region, or the life-history of some animal, or stones and minerals of some special interest, can be put in the museum.

To make these useful, the animals, especially the insects, must be mounted (best inside glass cases), and the plants must be pressed and mounted on cardboard.

Everything must be labeled with its name, the place where it is found, and the character of the place—mountain, valley, prairie, swamp, beach, etc.

III. *Some subjects on which the school would like papers or sets of paintings or drawings.*

1. An excursion.
   A description of a trip through beautiful or interesting scenery.
2. The topography of a region.
   What are the most conspicuous features of the region? Hills; mountains; valleys; ravines; lakes; rivers; swamps; marshes; prairies.
   Make a map showing the relative location of the different features.
   Describe one or two of these.
   What forces do you see at present building up and wearing down the region?
   What forces do you think may have worked there in the past?
3. Plants.
   Describe several trees and other plants.
   Use drawing and painting to show branching, the forms of the tops, and the shapes of the leaves.
   Tell in writing in what kind of place they grow, whether alone, or with others of the same kind, or of different kinds.
4. Animals.
   Keep a list of any wild animals you see.
   Pick out one wild or tame animal, watch it as closely as possible, and write an interesting account of it.
5. An industry.
   Watch the manufacture of some product or the growing or harvesting of some crop.
   Get as many pictures of the industry as you can, photographs or drawings.
   Secure samples of the material at various stages, when possible.

Write a description of the process.

6. The scene of a historic event.
   If you visit the scene of any important historic event, tell the story of the event, describing carefully the place where each part of it occurred.
7. The exposition.
   General description.
   The exhibit which I liked best.
   The music.
   The different races of people.

IV. *Suggestions upon music for children who go to the exposition.*

1. Third and fourth grades.
   *a*) Write description of musical instruments of various peoples, giving approximate measurements, and general character of the tone. For example, is it like a mandolin, a harp, a flute? Is it loud or soft, high or low?
   *b*) Write short descriptions of players and singers, including the manner of playing and singing, and the *occasion.* For example, is it for dancing? Does it accompany work or play, or any special kind of activity?
   *c*) Do they keep very good time? Can you count it? Is it beautiful music to you? Do they seem to like it?
   *d*) Make drawings or paintings of instruments and players.
2. Additional points for upper grades.
   *a*) What kind of time do they use most? Do they change the time in the middle of a piece?
   *b*) Does the music mean much to you? Is it martial, sentimental, childlike, fantastic, savage, delicate, happy, sad? Is it varied or monotonous?

The following were among the contributions handed in, the autumn of 1904:

### FISHING

The way they fish in Charlevoix is this. First they set the nets in Lake Michigan. About every other day some tugs go out loaded with nets, bring in the fish, and drop the nets that they brought out in place of the others. The fish are cleaned, sorted, and put in boxes on the tug so as not to waste any time. After they get back to the fishery, some of the fish they pack in ice, put in little cars, and ship. Some of them they put in the smoke-house to be smoked.

The smoke-house is made out of bricks, and in the bottom there is a hole for the fire. The walls and inside of the door are covered with tar. The door is made out of wood. They have a steel cover to put over the fire so the smoke could get only at the fish. The fish were hung on wooden rods, and they had sticks to hold the sides of the fish apart so the smoke could get at the fish. Over a hundred fish are smoked at a time.

The nets are washed in lime, and then hung on large wooden rods to dry so they would not rot. The bottom of the nets are weighted with lead, and the tops are floated with little pieces of wood, so the net will be in a perpendicular position. The fish swim into the net without knowing. The nets are made of fine string that looks as if it would break easily, but it is very strong. On the edge of the net there is a thicker and stronger cord, because it has to hold all of the fish.

LUCY DUNLAP SMITH, third grade

## THE SAW MILL IN GLADSTONE, MICHIGAN

The lumber comes from across the bay and farther north than where we were. It comes in booms from 500 to 1,000 logs, and is towed by tugs. When it gets to the yards they untie it, and men with long poles with iron points on the end spear the logs and send them on a moving thing (made of iron with sharp points) that runs up to the second story of the mill, and keeps going around.

When the logs get to the top, a man with a shorter spear takes them off and puts the perfect or best logs on one side to make boards of, and the poor ones on the other side to be made into shingles. The good logs are pushed over to a sort of moving car with a big clamp on the side that catches up and holds the logs, then turns them over. There is a big saw at one end, and as the car moves it saws the bark off first, which they burn in the furnace. Then they saw the boards. The boards are pushed on to the next lot of men, where each board is placed in position and the rough sides are taken off.

Then they pass on to a set of four saws. If the board was perfect, just enough would be sawed off to even the ends; if not, these saws were worked by foot levers, and the board could be cut either 8, 12, 16, or 20 feet. The poor sides that were cut off were thrown to one side and sawed in just the same way as the larger board, only smaller, and were made into laths—two laths cut at a time. They were bundled and carted away as fast as made. Then the most imperfect logs that were thrown aside as they came up the shift were sawed into shingle lengths. This is very dangerous as the men have to hold the short pieces of logs so close to the saw that Mr. M—— said that they never knew until after it was over when a finger was off. They made three grades of shingles—shingles 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. I watched them bundle the shingles, which the men did very fast. We also watched them sharpen the big saws, which was very interesting.

FERDINAND BUNTER, fourth grade